CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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FROM THE EXPOSITOR AND REVIEW.

METHODS OF INTERPRETING THE BOOK OF REVELATION.

(*Concluded from our last.*)

The idea thus broached by Winchester, was soon advanced by others, and a systematic illustration of it attempted by several writers, but with indifferent success. It was a task more difficult than one would at first suppose to take up the scheme where Bishop Newton left it, and continue it onwards to the next change of the scene, preserving at the same time a consistent whole. This, however, was at length accomplished by Mr. Faber, whose well known Dissertation on the Prophecies appeared in 1806. He makes the seventh trumpet begin to sound on the 12th of August, 1792, when the monarchy of France was overthrown. The first vial was poured out on the 26th of the same month, when Atheism was announced as the national profession; the second vial denoted the massacres commenced in the September following; the third, the march of the republican armies against the neighboring states; the fourth, the the elevation of Bonaparte to the empire, and the establishment of military despotism, &c. So far, the interpretation seemed to match well enough; and the fear entertained of France, the hatred towards her gigantic despot, ensured it a hearty reception, even with many who had more faith in its utility than in its truth. Faber, as we have already intimated, devised no new scheme for the Apocalypse at large; he meant only to *continue* that of bishop Newton about fifty years onwards. But in doing this he was obliged, for the sake of consistency, to transpose the order of several important points in the earlier periods; and nothing will more clearly show the capricious nature of these fanciful hypotheses, than a comparison of the contradictory arrangements made out by these two authors, each of whom supports his own by coincidences equally striking. Thus, Newton discovers, with his usual ingenuity that the tenth chapter begins at a period yet future; Faber, just as ingeniously, that it began A. D. 606. According to the former, the death and resurrection of the two witnessess belong to the events of coming time; according to the latter, all was fulfilled, A. D. 1547 and 1550, among the Protestants in Germany. In reading Newton, we find that the war in heaven between Michael and the devil, was the persecution of the gospel during the first three centuries, and that the expulsion of satan into the earth was the triumph of Christianity under Constantine, A. D. 313. Turning to Faber, we learn that this is a gross miscalculation, and that the actual reference is to the struggles of the the Protestants with the Catholics after the Reformation, and to the secret diffusion of infidelity through Europe. Again: 'the woman fled into the wilderness' from the pursuit of the dragon; that is, says Newton, the true church sunk into obscurity in the dark ages; nay, says Faber, it means that she found refuge in England, the bulwark of the Reformation, during the late troubles in France. The flood which the dragon vomited after the woman, but which was immediately swallowed up by the earth, is shown by Newton to have been the flood of Northern barbarians who broke into the territories of the church in the fifth and sixth centuries, and were there converted and amalgated with the Christians; while Faber shows it to have been the flood of modern infidels, who were at length swallowed up when the earth, that is, all Europe, rose in arms against France. So unsubstantial is this scheme of interpretation, with all its specious appearances! To repeat language already quoted, under every possible construction the event can still be made to answer.

We have traced this scheme from its rise to its full developement. Its present popularity seemed to call for such an exposure. But we must again observe that, notwithstanding the number of its advocates, it has never been approved by the higher class of Biblical critics even among Protestants; and we now owe some notice of the hypothesis, on the other hand, which *these* have generally adopted, though with various and important modifications. Most of them have supposed that nearly all the Apocalypse, and some, that the whole of it, was fulfilled long ago, in the first ages of the church. The English giant of sacred literature, Lightfoot, whose fame is co-extensive with Christendom, maintained (about A. D. 1650,) that the first resurrection, mentioned in the twentieth chapter, was the moral awakening from unbelief to faith, and that the descent of the New Jerusalem, described in Chapters twenty-first and twenty-second, was the establishment of the gospel dispensation upon earth. Though we have not his works before us at this moment, we think there is no risk in saying that he applied no part of the book to modern events. Dr. Hammond (A. D. 1653,) explains it, so far as the end of the nineteenth chapter, of the fortunes of Christianity till the overthrow of heathenism in ancient Rome; the three remaining chapters he refers to the prosperous state of the church after Constantine; though he takes one short eccentric flight meanwhile, and applies six verses at the close of the twentieth chapter, to the end of the world and to a general judgment. Wetstein, who ranks among the profoundest of the old German critics, framed a regular synopsis of the book, (A. D. 1752,) and made all its prophecies to have been fulfilled previous to the year 150.* Another German critic, the celebrated Eichhorn, who published a commentary on the Apocalypse in 1791, applied it, so far as the middle of the xxth chapter, to the progress of Christianity until the overthrow of the Jewish religion, and the suppression of heathenism in the Roman empire; while his distinguished cotemporary, Rosenmuller, confined nearly all of this part of the book to a single train of events, the destruction of the Jews and of their worship, together with the prevalence of the gospel. From the middle of the twentieth chapter, however, to the conclusion of the prophecy, both of these authors suppose that the end of the world and the scenes of eternity are the subjects represented. Some later critics, again, who are now in high repute, refer the whole, without exception, to the present state of being. Hug, in his Introduction to the New Testament, (A. D. 1808,) takes this course. Having followed the general tenor of Eichhorn's application till he enters on the twentieth chapters, he proceeds to maintain that the first and second resurrections there mentioned, together with the arraignment of the dead small and great before the throne of God, and the judgment passed upon them, ought to be understood figuratively, like the other visions; and that the New Jerusalem which came down from God out of heaven, denoted Christianity with all its blessings descending victorious upon earth. It may surprize some of our readers to learn that the explanation here given from Hug, is referred to with approbation rather than censure, in a work lately prepared by one of the professors in the Theological Seminary at Andover.* The same Professor adds, and we think justly, that the following rules which the German critic proposes for understanding the Apocalyptic visions, deserve the attention of all interpreters: 'It is hardly necessary to remark,' says Hug, 'that all the *strokes* and *figures* in this great work are by no means significant. Many are inserted only to give life and animation to the whole; or, they are introduced by way of ornament out of the prophets and holy books; and no one who is any judge of such matters, will deny that the filling up of the whole is in an extraordinary degree rich, and, for occidental readers, in the highest degree splendid. The description of chastisements by hail, pestilence, floods which are changed into flood, by insects and vermin, are imitations of the plagues of Egypt, and do not here either require or admit any particular historical explanation or application. The eclipses of the sun and moon, the falling stars, are usual figures employed by the prophets in order to represent the overthrow of states and empires, or the fall of renowned persons, by means of great and terrible physical phenomena. And in general, the sublimest and most appropriate and striking figures and passages of the prophets are interwoven by the author in his work; and they thus impart to the whole an oriental splendor, which leaves all Arabian writers far behind. The *numbers* also are seldom to be taken arithmetically, unless there exist special ground for it. Seven seals, seven angels, seven trumpets, seven vials, seven thunders, who does not here see that this is the holy prophetic number, and is employed only as ornament and costume? So also the round numbers, and times, and half times, they admit neither of a chronological nor numerical reckoning; but are generally put for indefinite times and numbers. There are in the whole [book,] only two historical events, which, consequently, admit of a historical interpretation. Aside from the general prevalence of Christianity, with which the vision closes, the destruction of Jerusalem is a known fact; and by the side of this stands also the downfall of Rome. Here we are necessarily referred to the historical interpretation, so far as it can be applied without violence, and so far as history voluntarily affords her aid. But every thing minute and frivolous and every thing far-fetched or forced, must be cautiously avoided.' Thus far Hug. And if we mistake not, the current of opinion with Biblical students in general is now bearing

*A translation of Wetstein's synopsis of the Apocalypse may be found in Dr. A. Clarke's commentary on the New Testament, vol. ii. Pref. to the Rev. of St. John, pp. 984, 985. On the next page, the Dr gives Rosenmuller's synopsis, and a very brief sketch from Eichhorn's.

*Robinson's Calmet, Art. Apocalypse.

towards the view he has taken of the Apocalypse. Certain it is, that with them, the fanciful scheme of Newton and Faber is growing obsolete, and a persuasion gaining strength that the fulfillment of the prophecy is to be sought in the earlier times of Christianity. In England, it is true, national antipathy and the inveterate prejudices, political as well as religious, of the Catholic question, will perhaps retard the change; and we may suspect that her divines will be the last to give up the complacent idea that the church of Rome and the French revolution and empire had been for ages pointed-out, by the visible finger of God, to the abhorrence and hatred of the faithful.

Having thus surveyed the most remarkable methods which Protestants have used, of interpreting the Revelation, it is now time to come to the book itself. But what we have to offer on this head, will be given in another article, under a title more appropriate. H. B. 2d.

THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

The present article will be devoted to three topics, the authenticity, the date, and the meaning, of this book. On the last named subject, however, we must content ourselves with some general hints and miscellaneous remarks, without venturing on the difficult enterprize which has proved fatal even to many skillful interpreters, an attempt to give a thorough explanation.

1. It is well known that this is one of the few books, in the New Testament, whose authenticity has been much doubted. Its obscurity, which has hitherto baffled all endeavors at an easy, natural and perfectly satisfactory solution, together with its wild romantic style, so different from the simplicity of St. John's other writings, has no doubt contributed to render it suspected; but in addition to all this, there has been alleged a want of historical evidence in its favor, which with many, as with us, has probably confirmed the doubts that other considerations has suggested. On this point, however, we now think there is some misapprehension. If we take all the circumstances of the case together, as they stand on the face of ancient records, the genuineness of the book appears well enough attested.—It seems to have been received by the early Christian church, without the least hesitation, as the work of St. John; till at length, in the third century, the absurd use that was made of it by certain sects, led one or two of the fathers to deny its apostolic origin, for the purpose of overthrowing a particular doctrine which had been supported by its authority. That this motive was the only occasion of the denial, is so manifest, that their rejection of it ought to have had no weight against the uniform testimony of earlier writers; though it actually affected to a considerable degree the reputation of the book in succeeding ages. The truth of this representation will be seen from the following historical detail, which, it is believed, contains all the facts in the case, on which we can rely with confidence.

From the language of Justin Martyr, about A. D. 160, it appears that the Revelation was then received as St. John's. He says, 'A man from among us, by the name of John, one of the apostles of Christ, has prophesied, in the Revelation made to him, that the believers in Christ shall live a thousands years in Jerusalem; and after that, shall be the general or eternal resurrection and universal judgment.' Melito, bishop of Sardis, one of the seven churches addressed in the Revelation, flourished about A. D. 174. All his works are now lost; but the historian Eusebius informs us, that among those extant in his time, there was one entitled, 'Of the Revelation of St. John:' a fact which sufficiently discovers the estimation in which the book was then held. In the Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienna, written about A. D. 177, it is plainly referred to as authentic Scripture; 'both the magistrates,' say they, 'and the people were vexed at the very heart, that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still:' a passage quoted from the twenty-second chapter of the Revelation. Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, (about A. D. 181,) is said by Eusebius to have adduced proofs from this book, in a work, now lost, which he wrote against certain heretics. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, (about A. D. 185,) often mentions the Revelation, and attributes it implicitly to John the apostle of the Lord.—Clemens Alexandrinus, (about A. D. 195,) quotes it several times; and once in the following language: 'they shall sit on twenty-four thrones, judging the people, as John says in the Revelation.' Tertullian, (about A. D. 200,) refers to it frequently as the work of the same John who wrote the Epistle universally ascribed to the apostle. In one place he says, 'Again, the apostle John describes, in the Apocalypse, a sharp two-edged sword coming out of the mouth of God.' In another passage, while opposing Marcion, a Gnostic heretic, who disowned several books of the New Testament and altered the rest, he observes, 'We have churches which are the disciples of John. For though Marcion rejects the Revelation, yet the succession of bishops, traced back to the beginning, will assure us that John is the author.'

Thus far we find no indication that the genuineness of the book had ever been doubted in the regular churches; though, among the capricious and whimsical heretics of the Gnostic class, it had sometimes shared the fate of the rest of the New Testament. We now approach the period, however, when it appears to have been, for the first time, called in question, by any of the orthodox Christians; and it may be well to take particular notice of the occasion. A gross idea had long prevailed, on the authority of the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, that the saints, after being raised from the dead, were to reign with Christ a thousand years upon earth, enjoying all the sensual gratifications which nature could afford. The fanatical sect of Montanists had lately carried this notion to the utmost extravagance, and dwelt upon it as one of their favorite tenets. About A. D. 212, Caius, a Roman presbyter, attacked them; and for the purpose, it would seem, of depriving them of their principal evidence, attributed the Revelation to Cerinthus, a famous Gnostic, contemporary with St. John. 'Cerinthus,' said he, 'in some Revelations which he wrote in the name of a great apostle, imposes on us monstrous things which he pretends were shown him by angels, saying that after the resurrection there shall be a terrestrial kingdom of Christ, and that men shall live again in Jerusalem, where they will enjoy sensual delights and pleasures, and spend a thousand years in nuptial entertainments.' Such was the ground that Caius took with regard to the author of the Apocalypse.

His unsupported assertion, however, carries its own refutation on its very face. Who can suppose that a book written by the hated Cerinthus, whose name was never uttered by the orthodox Christians but with abhorrence, would, nevertheless, be received by them and venerated as we have already seen that the Revelation actually was, in the early church? If it be said that they never suspected its real origin; whence then, we would ask, did Caius obtain his knowledge, after more than a century of profound silence? Indeed, his testimony seems to have weighed nothing with his cotemporaries, nor with the immediately succeeding fathers, since they continued to quote the book as indisdispubly St. John's. Hippolytus (about A. D. 220,) refers to it in the following significant connexion, the Gospel and Apocalypse according to John. The celebrated Origen, though a zealous opposer of the Millennarians, (A. D. 230—250,) received it without an intimation of doubt, and expressly ascribed it to 'John the son of Zebedee,' that is, the apostle. Cyprian (about A. D. 255,) reckoned it among the books of sacred Scripture, without however designating the author's name. With these notices before us, we cannot mistake the reputation it still continued to maintain in the church, notwithstanding the impeachment, to all appearance utterly unfounded, which Caius had brought against it.

But soon after the death of Origin, it was again brought into question, by a new endeavor to advance the doctrine of the Millennium on its authority. Nepos, a bishop in Egypt, published a very successful work in favor of that tenet, and adduced his proofs from the Apocalypse. The learned Dionysius of Alexandria (about A. D. 260,) answered him, and took occasion to make some remarks concerning this book. Certain Christians, he observes, rejected it as the work of the heretic Cerinthus;* but for himself, he durst not renounce it, since it was generally held in veneration. Its meaning, however, appeared to him undiscoverble, though he was persuaded it ought not to be interpreted in the gross literal sense. Nor could he believe that it was writen by John the apostle, on account of the dissimilarity of its genius, thoughts and style, from those of the Evangelist; but he was inclined to suppose its author to have been another John, a presbyter, who, according to Papias, lived in Asia cotemporay with the Evangelist, and whom he was willing to acknowledge an inspired man. Such was the conjecture of Dionysus. For some time, however, it seems to have made little impression; but the renown of his learning and talents, and his character as one of the principal bishops in Christendom, drew attention at length to his opinion, and gave it an influence which in the next century impaired the credit of the Apocalypse to a very sensible degree. Eusebius (about A. D. 330,) hesitated whether to ascribe it to John the apostle, or to John the presbyter. Cyril of Jerusalem (about A. D. 350,) seems not to have received it; and the Council of Laodicea (about 363,) did not insert it in the Catalogue of canonical books of Scripture. We need not trace its fortune further, but merely observe in general, that while it was rejected by some and doubted by others, especially among the Greeks, it was still received by far the larger part of the church. And from the tenor of the foregoing narrative, it will be seen at once that the hesitation which in a few instances arose with regard to its authenticity, originated in polemical motives, and ought not therefore to impair in the least the historical evidence afforded by its general reception among the Christians, previously to the year 200.

A more plausible objection, however, to its genuineness, may be urged from the apparent incongruity of its character with that of St. John's other writings. His Gospel and Epistles are distinguished throughout by a childlike simplicity, whereas the Apocalypse is full of the most dazzling figures and georgeous, not to say monstrous, imagery; and can we suppose that the same genius was the author of productions so strikingly dissimilar? The solution of this query depends not so much on a logical course of deduction, as on a correct judgment of human character and of the various developements it naturally undergoes in different circumstances. We need not remind careful observers that qualities seemingly the most opposite are fre-

*Here Dionysius evidently alludes to Caius' rejection of the Apocalypse.

quently found in one person; and we would appeal to them whether that affectionate, pathetic, artless yet contemplative spirit which in extreme old age pervaded St. John's Gospel and Epistles, does not belong to the very temperament which, under some transporting excitement, especially in earlier life, might rise to the romantic, visionary strain of the Apocalypse. As to the peculiar turn of expression and the form of sentences, they are manifestly the same in the latter as in the former, and numerous coincidences in the use of set phrases, have been pointed out, all indicating a common origin.

II. Admitting then that St. John was probably the author of the Apocalypse, when was it written? Were we to judge solely from the allusions of the book itself, we should answer at once, before the destruction of Jerusalem; but if from the balance of mere historical testimony, such as it is, we should place its date after that event, and about the year 96. This testimony, however, is not of the most unquestionable character. Eusebius, in the fourth century, is the first to mention the time of St. John's banishment to Patmos, where he saw the Revelation; and he refers it, on what authority we know not, to the reign of Domitian, and adds, that he was liberated on the accession of the emperor Nerva, which took place A. D. 96. There is indeed an ambiguous passage in an earlier and more competent witness, Irenæus, which has been generally understood to authenticate this statement, and to assert that the Revelation was seen 'at the end of Domitian's reign;' but Wetstein and Rosenmuller contend that the language relates to the time when St. John himself lived, and not to the period of his vision. These are all the historical notices concerning the date of the book which are of any importance; for the statements of Jerome are probably founded on those of Eusebius; and as to the contrary representations sometimes quoted from Epiphanius, who refers it back to about the year 50, nobody acquainted with the romancing habit of this writer, ought to attach the least weight to them.

Let us now turn to the chronological marks which may be traced in the Apocalypse itself. Here we cannot do better than to avail ourselves of the labors of an author who has faithfully illustrated this part of the subject: 'It appears to me,' says he, 'that this book contains several express and direct references to the city of Jerusalem and the temple; the propriety of which I am unable to discover, on the supposition that this city was not then in existence. In chap. xi, 1, 2, we find the following language: "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod; and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." The above passage contains evident allusions both to the city and temple; and also, a prediction of the approaching desolation of the city. The court which was, "without the temple," was, unquestionably, what was called *the court of the Gentiles*, and was peculiar to the tempel at Jerusalem; consequently, the allusion to the temple is direct and obvious. No argucan be necessary to show that by the phrase "holy city," Jerusalem was intended; but, if any doubts can remain, they must be removed by the words of our Savior, Luke xvi, 24: "And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." What other inference, then, can we draw from the language of the Revelator, but that at the time he wrote, Jerusalem and its temple were in existence, and that the city was not yet "trodden down of the Gentiles?" At verse 8 of this chapter, it is said, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Here, it may be observed, are two circumstances mentioned, which were literally appllicable to Jerusalem, but to no other city. 1. It was declared that their dead bodies should lie in the streets of this city. That this prediction was literally fulfilled, in relation to Jerusalem and its wretched inhabitants, has been already shown. 2. It is expressly declared that the city, whose inhabitants should thus suffer, was "where also our Lord was crucified." In chap. xiv, 15, there is another evident allusion to the temple at Jerusalem, in contradistinction from the "temple which is in heaven," mentioned ver. 17. The whole of chap. xviii. apparently refers to Jerusalem with far more propriety than to any other city or kingdom. My limits will permit me to notice but a very small part: Verses 4, 5, "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." This admonition corresponds with the warnings of our Savior to his disciples and his instructions to enable them to escape from impending danger. Ver. 8. "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day; death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." The remarks of Dr. A Clarke on this verse are so appropriate, that I need make no apology for inserting them in this place: "*Therefore shall her plagues come.*] *Death*, by the sword of her adversaries; *mourning*, on account of the slaugher; and *famine*, the fruits of the field being destroyed by the hostile bands. *Utterly burned with fire.* Of what *city* is this spoken? Rome *pagan* has never been thus treated; Alaric and Totila burnt only some parts with fire. Rome *papal* has not been thus treated; but this is true of Jerusalem, and yet Jerusalem is not generally thought to be intended." Again, ver. 24: "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." To what city will this language so properly apply as to Jerusalem? It forcibly brings to mind the words of Christ, addressed to its devoted inhabitants: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee," &c. Alluding also to the murder of the prophets of this city, he says, "for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." Well might the Savior declare unto them, that upon them should "come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth." I might multiply quotations, evidently alluding to this city and temple, but the above are deemed sufficient. And I would now ask, in view of this language, have we not sufficient *inteanal* evidence, in the book itself, to satisfy us that it was written while Jerusalem and her temple were yet standing?'* In addition to the foregoing, it is said that the original, though exhibiting the same general peand culiarities of diction with St. John's Gospels Epistles, betrays a less familiar use of the Greek language, and abounds much more in anomalies and Hebraisms: a circumstance that seems to indicate an earlier period of the author's life, when he had just begun to write in a foreign tongue. And we need not say that the luxuriance of imagination displayed in the Apocalypse, comports much better with his age at the earlier date, than at the year 96, when he was almost a hundred years old.

Such are our principal reasons for believing that the book was written before the destruction of Jerusalem. That this opinion may not be thought singular, we observe that although it has not the majority, perhaps, of critics in its favor, it is maintained by Hentenius, Harduin, Grotius, Lightfoot, Hammond, Sir I. Newton, Bishop Newton, and Wetstein; and that Rosenmuller and Dr. A. Clarke seem inclined to it.

III. With regard to the meaning of the book, or the subject of the prophecy, the author himself has taken the utmost care to fix certain definite limits, which however have been totally disregarded by most interpreters. He has confined its fulfilment to his own age, and represented that his cotemporaries were the people concerned. What could be more explicit to this point, than the formal introduction with which he begins? 'The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him *to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;* and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John, who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and *keep those things that are written therein; for the time is at hand.*' Here, with manifest solicitude, he warns his readers, at the outset, that the events to be predicted were not of remote but of immediate occurrence. And lest it should be supposed that this advertisement might perhaps refer only to the things contained in the letters which follow to the seven churches of Asia, he takes occasion, at the end of the whole book, to repeat the same important admonition, and to assert expressly that it relates to 'the sayings of the prophecy' at large; 'And he said unto me, The sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants *the things which must shortly be done.* Behold, *I come quickly;* blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book . . . . . And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book *for the time is at hand.* He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, *I come quickly;* and my reward is with me, to give evry man as his work shall be. . . . . He which testifieth these things, saith, *Surely I come quickly;* Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.'† Such is the earnest protestation with which this book begins and closes; and ought it not to be observed in our application of the propheuy? To us it is astonishing that interpreters, with these explicit limitatations before their eyes, have proceeded, without the least ceremony, without even a respectful token of cognizance, to carry the predictions, century after century, down the history of the world, and, when they had arranged them over all past time, to refer the remnant to ages yet future.

It has been already shown, under our second head, that Jerusalem and the temple are repeatedly introduced in the tenor of the prophecy. Now, let one read the book with this circumstance in mind, and we think he will perceive that its representations comport well with the scenes of that unparalleled tribulation which

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*Essays on the coming of Christ. By Warren Skinner. pp. 145—148.

*Rev. i. 1—3.

†Rev. xxii, 6—21. Eichhorn, (Comment. in Apocal. i. 1.) aware of the obstacle which these narrow limits of time would present to his more extended interpretation, suggests that in all the instances here quoted, St. John declared the things near at hand in order to signify not that they were soon to take place, but that they were sure! an interpretatioe which, besides doing violence to the language, would make nonsense of the passage: 'Seal not the sayings of this book, for they will surely come to pass!' 'Surely, I come surely, Amen!'

came upon the Jews shortly afterwards; and that they seem to point out plainly enough the alternate sufferings and relief of the faithful, the malice, the vexations, the torments of their enemies, the overthrow of Judaism, and the full establishment of the gospel dispensation upon earth. It will be found, too, that the figures and imagery often resemble those which Christ had used in foretelling the same events. Thus, in the sixth chapter, the vision opens with a train of war, famine and pestilence among those who had slain the martyrs; and closes with a terrible scene of ruin, in which they called upon 'the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:' the very representation, and in part the very language, our Saviour had applied to the destruction of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, to complete the coincidence the servants of God are introduced in the next chapter, gathered from all the tribes of Israel and from the Gentile nations, and sealed with the seal of God, that they might not be involved in the common ruin. Again: a continued series of calamities, tumults, wars and devastations, such as fitly denotes the events preceding the siege of the holy city, occupies the eighth and ninth chapters. The twelfth manifestly represents the state of the infant church of Christ amidst the persecuting Jews, and its preservation from the overwhelming flood that was ready to swollow it up. An account follows, in the thirteenth chapter, of false prophets, who, as our Saviour had foretold, should show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible, they should deceive the very elect; and in the fourteenth, we are carried onwards to the fall of Jerusalem, after the servants of God who had been sealed, were secured from the overthrow. The same series of events seems to be again described in the following chapters, of which the eighteenth gives a much more particular view of the destruction of that city in which 'was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all that were slain upon earth.' 'Rejoice over her, thou heaven,' exclaims the angel, 'and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.'

If these hints are correct, the Apocalypse is not a single train of predictions, following each other in chronological order from begining to end; but consists of various representations of the same general subject under different points of view, like our Saviour's prophecy in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel.

Such is the method of interpretation we would propose, as agreeing with the apparent allusions of the book, and with St. John's declaration that 'the things' spoken of, should 'shortly come to pass.' In this scheme, the only serious difficulty, we apprehend, will arise from the persuasion that, in the twentieth chapter, the prophecy runs onward to the time of the general resurrection; and in the two following, to the eternal state after that event. But a careful examination, we think, will discover that the resurrection there mentioned, cannot be understood literally, on account of the very circumstances connected with it. After the martyrs had been raised to life, and had reigned with Christ a thousand years on earth, while the rest of the dead lived not, it is said that Satan went 'out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went upon the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.' Was that literally a resurrection from the dead, which was succeeded by this gathering of the nations of the earth to battle? or is this emblematical, like the rest of the book? And the next chapters, the twenty-first and twenty-second, manifestly refer, not to the scenes of a changeless eternity, but to the gospel dispensation, under the figure of a 'holy city, the new Jerusalem, *coming down from God out of heaven*,' into which 'the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor.' Its gates are said never to be shut, that they might 'bring the glory and honor of the nations into it;' and the tree of life, which grew in the midst of its street, bore leaves which 'were for the healing of the nations.' All these circumstances and peculiarities belong to the Christian religion, here upearth, and to its attractive and purifying influence. H. B. 2d.

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man whosoever thou art, that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost the same things. Rom. ii: 1.

We only ask our Presbyterian brethren (says the Universalist Watchman,) to allow Universalists the same privilege, that they claim themselves. That is for exercising their own judgment in understanding and explaining scripture. But are they willing to grant it? Have we not frequently been told that Universalists are not qualified to judge of the meaning of the Bible? And yet these same limitarians find fault with the Roman Catholics, for doing the same thing. In a controversy now going on between the Rev. Mr. Hughes, (Roman Catholic) and Rev. Mr. Breckenridge (Presbyterian) the latter introduces the following dialogue for the purpose of exhibiting the unfairness of his antagonist.

"If *private interpretation* is ruinous in the use of all other Scripture, why is it not ruinous here? If *private interpretation* is sufficient to explore the whole word of God, in order to find out the true Church, why is it not sufficient for the rest? And if truth stands out as clear as the mountain tops, so that the fool cannot err, in whatever relates to the church, how does it become suddenly and impenetrably dark in all things relating to Jesus and salvation, to sin, and holiness, to all doctrine, and all duty? If *private interpretation* may, with moral certainty, and indisputable credibility, lay the foundation of your whole system, why may it not avail for the whole volume of truth, and the whole catalogue of doctrine? Here, then, by the admission of your own writers, *private interpretation* is the only guide in a search after salvation, and all the articles of faith; for you say, there is no salvation out of the true Church; and the true Church alone teaches infallibly the articles of faith; and private interpretation must find out the true Church! Is not this, then, a ruinous chasm; a palpable contradiction; a most disingenuous and deceitful argument?

It may simplify and enforce the above remarks to give the following dialogue between a Romanist and a Protestant, extracted from an able work on the subject of infalibility.

Papist. I pity your condition, Sir, to see you live at such uncertainties for your religion, and obstinately refuse to consult that living oracle and infallible judge, whom God hath placed in his church, to decide all controversies in faith and worship.

Protestant. Sir, I thank you for your charity; and though I do not find myself so uncertain as I perceive you think I am, yet I should be glad of such an infallible guide as you talk of, if I knew where to find him.

Papist. He is to be found in the church of Rome; for that is the church which is the pillar and ground of the truth; there is St. Peter's chair, whom Christ made the supreme governor of his church, whom he commanded to feed his lambs and his sheep; that rock on whom Christ promised to build His church, and that the gates of Hell should not prevail against it; and, therefore, in communion with this church and in obedience to the supreme pastor of it, ye cannot err.

Protestant. But pray how shall I be sure of this?

Papist. Do you ask that now, when I have referred you to such plain texts of Scripture for the proof of it?

Protestant. Will you allow me then, to interpret these texts according to my own private judgement? And why then may I not use my judgment in other matters? for I think all the articles are as plain in Scripture, as that the Pope or church of Rome is the supreme infallible judge; and indeed, if I must stand to my own judgment in this matter, I can find no such thing in these texts as you have alleged.

Papist. Your own judgment! No, by no means: this causes all the heresies in the world, that men will presume to judge for themselves.

Protestant. What course must I take then?

Papist. You must stand to the judgment of the church, which cannot err; and whatever heretics say, she will tell you that these texts prove the church's infallibility.

Protestant. Hold, Sir, what is it we are to prove?

Papist. That the church is infallible.

Protestant. And this I must prove from scripture?

Papist. Yes.

Protestant. And must not rely on *my own judgment* for the sense of Scripture, but on the interpretation of the church?

Papist. Right, this is the true Catholic way.

Protestant. That is, I must take the church's word that she is infallible?

Papist. No, you must believe the Scriptures, which says so.

Protestant. But I must believe the Scripture, not because I understand this to be the sense of it, but because the church so expounds it?

Papist. Right, for heretics expound it otherwise.

Protestant. And what is it *then but to take the church's word for her own infallibility; to believe it because she says it herself, or to believe it because she makes the Scripture say it? And so then you can never be infallibly certain of your church's infallibility; and of course you can never be infallibly certain that its teaching is true.* Then as to any doctrine, *say the divinity of Christ*, Protestants believe it, because the inspired word of God in its plain and obvious sense clearly teaches it. Papists believe it because the church says so—and they believe the church to be infallible because they think the plain and obvious sense of scripture teaches it. In a word the faith of a Protestant is resolved into the infallibility of Christ and his apostles; whereas the faith of Papists is resolved into the infallibility of Popes and councils. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge thou!" Peter, Acts iv, 19."

REVENGE.

Revenge is as incompatible with happiness as it is hostile to reason and religion. Let him whose heart is black with malice and studious of revenge, walk through the fields while clad in verdure, and adore the flowers: to his eye there is no beauty, the flowers to him exhale no fragrance. Dark as his soul, nature is robed in the deepest sable. The smile of beauty lights not up his bosom with joy; but the furies of hell rage in his breast, and render him as miserable as he could wish the object of his hate. But, let him lay his hand on his heart, and say, 'Revenge, I cast thee from me—Father forgive me as I forgive mine enemies'—and nature will assume a new and delightful garniture. Then, indeed, are the meads verdant and the flowers fragrant—then is the music of the groves delightful to the ear, and the smile of virtuous beauty lovely to the soul.

CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

EDITED BY T. J. SAWYER AND P. PRICE, NEW-YORK, AND ABEL C. THOMAS, PHILADELPHIA.

SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 1833.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

At the Orchard-street Church, and at the New Church in Sixth Avenue, foot of Amity-street commence regularly every Sabbath at half past *ten* in the morning—half past *three* in the afternoon, and at half past *seven* in the evening.

UNIVERSALISM AND INFIDELITY.

We have repeatedly had occasion to allude to the determination manifested by the reputed orthodox, to associate Universalism and Infidelity, in the public mind, by every means in their power. It was only a week or two since we called attention to a resolution of the Rev. Dr. De Witt, (colleague of the Rev. Dr. Brownlee,) setting forth the vast virtue of the Sunday School system in "*restraining Infidelity and Universalism.*" We have now to present still another specimen of the *Christian candor*, which so peculiarly marks the conduct of this class of persons. It will be found in the following article from the "Maine Wesleyan Journal" of the 9th ult. The number containing it was mailed us from Portland, Me. where the paper is printed—by some friend we suppose, from the manner in which the article was marked.

Although the burthen of the writer's philippic is against a class of persons having little community of feeling, or interest, with Universalists, yet as his evident aim is to present them to the public as one and the same, we feel it necessary to present the article entire. We do it the more readily, notwithstanding its extreme length, as we always desire, whenever practicable, that people should speak out *in their own language.* And in the present case, particularly, we wish the Universalists of New York to see the Christian candor and bearing of the Rev. W. C. Larrabee towards them, as a denomination—how admirably he can descant on Infidelity, and then endorse it over, at one brush of the pen, as the very essence of Universalism.—We have little disposition to mince matters with this "Rev. W. C. Larrabee." We pronounce him grossly ignorant on a subject in which, above all others, a minister should be well versed, or a cool deliberate slanderer of his kindred, and a worse character than the latter need not be attached to any man. There is—there can be no justification in the case. The principles are at perfect antipodes, and with the facilities of information on this subject, at the present day, it would argue a still greater disgrace, if possible, for a religious Teacher to plead ignorance here.

This *meek*, and *unassuming* servant of the cross tells us that "at midnight, it is generally over the bottle, or the gaming table. The youth with impatient desire and reckless steps, calls it to his aid, in the career of dissipation," &c. He does not, it is true, say this directly of Universalism, but in the next breath unequivocally asserts that "Universalists go *en masse* for Infidelity"—that he has not "found a Universalist in all this country (state of New York) who is not to all intents and purposes, a deistical infidel," &c. and follows up this modest assertion with the specious remark that "the prevalence of such principles would be seen and felt in all the ramifications of society," &c.

Never did a more slanderous insinuation proceed from the mouth of man, and we envy no one the heart that can engender it, be he Priest or Layman. How bright and sanctified soever he may make the *out side* appear, we tell him plainly, *within* is "all manner of uncleanness."

In a moral point of view we are ready and willing to compare denominations, and we are not at all concerned for the result. Let him go to the societies in this city—the Duane-st. the Orchard-st. or the Greenwich, or any Society in the state, and then select the most pious and circumspect of his own and contrast them, and then talk of the moral tendency of doctrines. In innumerable instances he will find that his own brethren will rather risk themselves in business transactions with the Universalist, as depraved and vicious as he may be, than with their own brethren. We do not speak this with any desire to reproach the Methodists as a denomination. We acknowledge, with gratitude, many warm personal friends among them. But when a prominent member deals in this wholesale slander, and is supported therein by their public Journals, it is necessary the mirror should be held up to his view—that he should be made sensible of his own deformity.

If it was *just*, and the *duty* of the Rev. W. C. Larrabee to thus write on this subject, why send it to a distant and extreme part of the country for circulation—why not publish it on the very field of iniquity, where the gross evils of which he complains, could be fully realized and understood? There is one, and but one, plain, unvarnished reason for this—he *knew* the common observation of community would give the *lie direct* to his representations.

Whatever he may say or think of the popular assertion that "Universalism sends men to Heaven in their sins" we can assure him that Universalists have full conviction that no man can attain that blessed abode with feelings such as he has manifested on the subject in question. They, however, and we ourselves, joy in the assurance that the period *is coming* when bitterness, hatred, envyings and strife shall be done away—when an end shall be made of sin—when the professed christian shall scorn to descend, for mere party effect, to the pittiful misrepresentations and slanders, practised in the every day strifes around us, by political aspirants. The meek disciple of the Savior should, and *will* be governed, even now, with higher and holier motives than these. And we humbly hope the Rev. W. C. Larrabee may speedily see the time when, like the persecuting Paul on his way to Damascus, he may cry out in the sincerity of his heart, "*Lord what wilt thou have me to do.*" But we have extended these remarks much beyond our original intention, and very likely beyond what the subject merited. Here follows the letter in question. P.

CAZENOVIA, N. Y. April 6th, 1833.

Dear Brother—In my former letter to you, I alluded to the prevalence of infidelity in this part of the country. I have met with nothing which has so much surprised me as this. I had often heard of infidelity—I had read the sad tale of its dreadful ravages among every thing that was good, during the fatal tragedy of the French Revolution—I had examined its cavils against the truth of revelation, and had studied those authors who have defended our holy religion against its unprincipled attacks—yet I had scarcely ever seen a professed infidel. To me, such a being seemed to exist, only like the fabled giant or pigmy, as a creature of the imagination. I had but an indistinct conception of infidelity. It was like the conception we form of a place from only observing its situation on the map. To meet, in every village, multitudes of all classes, who, without any concealment, unblushingly avow, in the face of a christian community, the repulsive principles of Paine, Owen, and Fanny Wright, was to me totally unexpected. I have met with nothing like it in all New England. There, however corrupt and notoriously immoral an individual may be—however reckless as to matters of religion he may appear, we seldom ever hear him abjure his faith in the Bible. In the land of the pilgrims such an individual would be considered a prodigy. The whole neighborhood would be astonished at his temerity, and would wonder at his folly. He would be feared, but not respected. It would be with difficulty that he could secure the confidence necessary to transact business with a christian community. But infidelity, though

> ——"a monster of so frightful mein,
> As to be hated, needs but to be seen,
> Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

In this part of our country, in nearly every village, a large portion of what are usually called the principal men, are infidels. But the monster of hideous aspect finds not its only residence in the families of the wealthy aristocracy. Like the frogs of Egypt, it creeps into every place. The splendid mansion, and the hut of poverty, open alike their doors at its approach. It sits with the great at the sumptuous table, and by the side of the inebriate in the chimney corner, with his bottle of whiskey. Its voice is heard in the halls of legislation, and in the loathsome abodes of infamy. At noon day it meets you, and, perhaps, throws insult in your face, at the corners of the street—at midnight, it is generally over the bottle, or the gaming table. The youth with impatient desire and reckless steps, calls it to his aid, in the career of dissipation.—The old man with white locks and tottering steps, while on the very verge of eternity, rushes into its cold embrace. You see it in every dress, sometimes in the garb of the gentleman—at others, in the beggared drunkard's rags. The city fops and the country clown alike claim its acquaintance. It addresses you in every tone, from the insidious insinuations of the artful, intriguing demagogue, to the brawlings of the drunkard's revel.

It may be interesting to you to know the precise ground its advocates take. They begin by denying at once the whole body of revelation. They profess to believe in the existence of a God, but deny that his will, can in any way, be ascertained, except by the light of nature. All the doctrines of the Bible, especially those deemed by christians the most important and essential are ridiculed. Hence all the exercises of devotion, religious meetings, prayer and revivals are objects of contempt and incessant ridicule. Read the following extract from a speech lately delivered in the New York legislature, by Mr. Hertell, and observe how he speaks of confession and prayer to God:—"I believe it unnecessary to confess my faith to God, for omniscience knows it without any communication from me. I never offer aid to Almighty power, nor presume to counsel infinite wisdom. I never supplicate infinite love to be more kind, nor desire to avert the judgment of immaculate justice." While, during the dreadful ravages of the Cholera, the Christian community were fasting and praying to the God of the Bible, the infidel was scoffing, and ridiculing such exercises. I sometimes feared, in those days of distress, that God, in his wrath at those who derided the sacred institutions he had established, and which his church from time immemorial, had practised, would pour his pestilential vials on the atmosphere, until the tongue of the blaspheming infidel should be compelled to acknowledge his Providence, and offer prayer to his throne of mercy. The infidel scorns the idea of pleading at the throne of grace for mercy. All he asks is justice, strict, severe, uncompromising justice. Poor, deluded mortal! what would he do,

if God should take him at his request, and administer the strict rewards of justice? Denying the Savior, abandoning the merits of the atonement, and spurning offered mercy, how would his account stand at the great tribunal? Infidelity is constantly venting its spleen and hatred against ministers of the gospel, uniformly called by way of reproach, "*priests*." The Spanish Inquisition—the crusades—the massacre of St. Bartholomews, are all charged upon them. Extraordinary pains are taken to throw reproach and insult upon the whole class of men, who profess to be ambassadors of Jesus, and ministers of the New Testament. Those who go as missionaries to foreign lands, are particularly marked out as objects of calumny and slander.

It is amusing to observe the inconsistencies exhibited in the character of the infidel party. Professing to be warm advocates for *liberality*, their temper exhibits *illiberality* personified. Constantly declaiming against bigotry, they are the most consummate bigots I ever saw. This party numbers many members where we should not look for them. In most of the Presbyterian congregations, are found many, who are acknowledged to be of this party. In the Protestant Episcopal congregations, still more are found; *while the Universalists go* en masse *for infidelity*. The Universalists of New York are no more like the Universalists of Maine, than those of Maine are like the Methodists or Congregationalists. I HAVE NOT SEEN OR HEARD OF A UNIVERSALIST IN ALL THIS COUNTRY, WHO IS NOT TO ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, A DEISTICAL INFIDEL.

It might be expected that the effects of so extensive a prevalence of such principles would be seen and felt in all the ramifications of society. In describing these effects, I write not from theory, but only state what I myself have seen and known. One of the effects is an impossibility of bringing moral and religious restraint to bear on the mind. The *liberal* infidel claims the right, not only of thinking and believing, but of acting as he pleases. It is his boast to act with a total disregard of the opinions of others. The Bible, that book which the descendants of the pilgrims of New-England are accustomed to revere as the highest authority in morals, has no influence over him. Appeal to its holy principles, and he will laugh in your face. He considers the exemplary, pious christian as a deluded bigot; the minister of the gospel, as an illiberal hypocrite, whose only object is to "*unite church and state*." In our New-England villages, how salutary is the influence, which the christian pastor exerts over the whole community; in a village of infidels, how feeble is the influence of that sacred office. What moral hold can you retain on one, who derides the Bible, contemns the sacred office of minister of the sanctuary, and looks with ridicule on the pious? The effect is seen in that independent recklessness of character, which defies all restraint, and rushes on, heedless of consequences.

The prevalence of sceptical principles is of vast injury in seasons of revival. When the conscience is aroused, and the mind stirred up by religious excitement, what an unhappy effect it has for a sceptical companion to come along, and make light of the matter. It seems to paralyze every effort which the minister, the church, and the sinner himself can make. And if by the Almighty power of Jehovah, the sceptic is converted, it is almost impossible to make an exemplary christian of him. Having been so long carried about by every wave of delusion, having been so long accustomed to no fixed principle, except the utter abandonment of all principle, he catches at every new fangled system of doctrine that comes along, fully answering the description the Apostle gives of certain characters in his day, who were "forever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."

But one of the worst effects of infidelity is seen in the annihilation of the social affections. Like the deadly Upas, it taints the atmosphere with an effluvia fatal to every social feeling. It breathes hot siroc on the domestic relations. It destroys benevolence, social friendship and hospitality. This I know: Where the spirit of infidelity prevails, friendly intercourse, and hospitable kindness are unknown. Each one thinks, and acts, and lives for himself. The people pass each other like the phantoms that flit through a sick man's brain. Even Christians manifest but little of that union of interest, confidence and fellowship for each other, which so remarkably distinguish the Christian family where other principles prevail. It would seem that infidelity had soured the temper, and destroyed the confidence of the community. Hence a great portion of the population are wrapt up in their own independent selfishness.

But after all, we have never yet seen the principles of infidelity carried into full effect.—Christianity has obtained so strong a hold on the opinions and feelings of the people, that scepticism, which is of modern date among us, has failed to counteract its holy influence. But were the principles of modern infidelity to be fully carried out, the most sacred relations ever instituted by God, would be destroyed. The names of husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, and all the endearments of home would be known no more. The voice of the father would be no more heard, calling his children around the family altar, nor would the tones of the Sabbath bell ever again call the wanderer to the house of God. The village church-yard would no more witness the train of mourners following their departed friends to the grave; nor would the grass that might grow above our cold, mouldering forms, ever be wet by one tear of friendship. The cup of life would be embittered by the forebodings of annihilation; the sick bed would be without consolation. Age would be misanthropic, gloomy and hopeless; youth would rush recklessly into dissipation, vice and misery; and "infancy, coming into the world, without a blessing, and untaught to pronounce the name of God, would long only for the period when the passions and indulgencies of life might commence."

May God preserve me and mine from the baleful influence of these insidious principles. I would rather follow my child, dear as he is to me, to the grave, than to see him embrace the principles of the sceptic. God grant, that the green hills and extended plains of my native home may never be trodden by the arrogant, and daring foot of infidelity, nor New-England's fair fame ever be sullied by the prevalence of such principles.

Yours, as ever,
W. C. LARRABEE.

NOTE—Since our remarks, attached to the foregoing letter, were prepared, we have received the Christian Pilot of May 16, published at Portland. By it we perceive we are indebted to our respected Br. Rayner for the copy of the Wesleyan Journal alluded to. The Pilot contains some pertinent remarks on the *origin* of infidelity, in allusion to the preceding letter, which we shall endeavor to copy next week. P.

A SUNDAY SCHOOL

Was organized in the Callowhil'-St. Church Philadelphia, on last Sunday, under favorable prospects, there being on the opening of the school about 50 scholars enrolled. This number will doubtless be increased two fold when it is generally known that such an institution is in existence. The attention of parents who are the friends of liberal Christianity, and who reside at a convenient distance from the Church, is respectfully solicited to the important object.

A STRANGE THING.

A prominent clergyman of this city, [Philad.] recently delivered a discourse from the text, "Harden not your hearts." He asserted that "Universalism is naturally calculated to harden the heart."

A few reflections arise. How strangely biassed by sectarian prejudice must that professor of Christianity be, who can perceive a heart-hardening influence in an unshaken faith in the promises of God! Surely, if a belief in my own salvation will have a tendency to soften my heart in love and gratitude to the Supreme Being, a belief in the extension of his unpurchased favor to my fellow beings would tend still more to soften my feelings and elevate my soul. Is the heart hardened in proportion to the extent and strength of faith in the Divine Benevolence? It must be so, if Universalism be naturally calculated to harden the heart. And then we must acknowledge, that the more strongly we doubt the goodness of God, and the greater the number our faith consigns to interminable wo, the softer will be our hearts and the more susceptible of salutary impressions!

Fifty years ago, it was deemed liberal to allow that a tithe of mankind would be saved. *Now*, there are few who contend for the damnation of more than one half of the human race. According to the assertion in review, the hardening tendency of the present Partialist faith, compared with the faith of half a century ago is as 5 to 1.

But I will not enlarge. He who has received into his soul a lively faith in God's universal and efficient grace, can feelingly testify, that his heart has been softened, improved, and happified by unwavering confidence in the promises of Him who cannot lie. A. C. T.

MORALS OF BOSTON AND NEW-YORK.

In a letter from Rev. Joshua Leavitt, of the Evangelist, dated Philadelphia, 18th inst addressed to his Publisher, we find the following:

"I found an amusing instance of the power of experience over prejudice in an intelligent gentleman who occupied the same apartment with myself in the rail road car. He was a native of Philadelphia, and had never been in New-England, but had, as he told me, many prejudices against the people, in consequence of having seen the overreaching propensities of some unworthy sons of the pilgrims. He had now been in New-England, and his prejudices were entirely removed. He said he had spent four or five days in the city of Boston, had staid at a large hotel, where from fifty to a hundred dined daily, had transacted business daily through the streets and along the wharves, and been constantly among the people, and in all that time he had not heard a single profane exclamation, nor seen a single individual intoxicated, or even heard a glass of liquor called for. No doubt such things remain and are done in Boston. But who could stay at a Hotel in New-York and do business along our streets and wharves and not see them?"

And pray tell us, Br. Leavitt, how is this? Boston, you must recollect, is the very cradle of "infidelity"—the hot bed of Universalism and Unitarianism, those blighting and demoralizing principles, in popular estimation; and notwithstanding, a person can spend "four or five days" there, in public houses—in the heart of business, and not hear "a single profane exclamation, nor see a single individual intoxicated, or even hear a glass of liquor called for." How stands the case with New-York—the good, orthodox city of New-York—that fountain head of all the mighty efforts of "American" and "National" Temperance, Bible, Tract, Sunday School, Missionary, Education, Young Men, Young Women, Magdalen, and we know not how

many other Societies? As Br. Leavitt justly queries, how long, respected reader, could an individual sojourn here, without hearing "profane exclamations" of the most revolting character, from the sooty sweep in the street, up to those who at least wear the livery of Gentlemen. We would not by any means, underrate the public morals of our city—they are undoubtedly on a par with the generality of populous places. But while the self styled orthodox persist in denouncing Universalism as so demoralizing in its tendency, we are fully justified in appealing to *facts* in the case. Compare this city with Boston, or with many places to the East, where Universalism may be said to be triumphant, and see who is to suffer in the comparison. No one, we presume, will have the hardihood to claim that New-York has been under the influence of Universalism, or that whatever vice or immorality may exist here, is justly chargeable to it. On the contrary, orthodoxy has reigned triumphant, and Universalism may hardly be said to have had a name here. No military encampment, probably, was ever under a more strict discipline than this city now is, and has been for a long time, in a religious point of view, with its thousand and one associations, its system of districting, and its horde of inquisitors, or religious conservators, in the persons of tract distributors, exhorters, &c. We derive no personal gratification from a reference to these things—we would not willingly reproach any man, or body of men, with their short-comings. It is the character of their own conduct that requires the contrast. In justice then let us hear no more of the immoral tendency of Universalism. Let them first cast the beam out of their own eye, and then shall they see clearly to pluck out the mote from their brothers.

P.

A MODEST DEMAND.

A public meeting was held at the Chatham-street Chapel on the 10th instant, "to consider the question in regard to *supplying the world with the Bible*." A Rev. Mr. Plummer, of Petersburgh, Va. addressed the meeting at length. In the course of his remarks he said there were actual demands pressing on the Society (for Bibles) "to the amount of *one hundred and sixty thousand dollars*," while "*thirty thousand*" was all they had "thought of attempting to raise." Instead of "getting better," he observed, the Society was "actually getting worse. At the annual meeting in 1830, the receipts for the previous year were stated at $166,000; in 1831, at $142,000; in 1832, at $127,000; and in 1833, the present year, at $84,000."

The reader cannot but admire the modesty of the following. Could the Rev. Mr. Plummer and his associates command the coffers of Wall-street, we doubt not they would drive business with a witness. And how much think you, kind reader, would they invest in "Houses, Lands and Stocks," notwithstanding their great compassion for the poor and benighted of our own, as well as heathen lands?

"Gentlemen," says he, "have made large remarks on the grandeur and glory of the Bible enterprize and American Christians have been taught that the great work is *done*, when indeed it is hardly commenced. We want a hundred and fifty millions of dollars, and shall we be told that it cannot be had? Sir, a gentleman made an estimate the other day, that there was that amount of money—in the United States? No, Sir. In the state of New-York? No, Sir. In this city? No, Sir—but *in Wall-street*. And when he to whom the silver and the gold belongs, shall hasten the time of his coming, we shall see that he can touch the hearts of the rich, and cause them to pour from their overflowing coffers into the treasury of his kingdom. After all, it is not on the donations of the rich that we are mainly to rely; and as it was said by one this morning, *Until we are willing to die poor, let us never expect the reign of heaven.*"

And after all, he says, *it is not on the rich we are* MAINLY *to rely!* and to give a practical illustration of this doctrine, he continues:

"Sir, the prayers and the efforts of God's people go together; and while I was at home considering this very question, and hesitating whether to bring it before the public at this anniversary or not, a poor woman, who supports herself by the work of her needle, brought and put into my hands three hundred dollars to go towards accomplishing the object."

"A POOR woman who SUPPORTS herself by the work of her needle," put into his hand "*three hundred dollars!*" and he can stand up before an enlightened community and boast of the act, and present it as an example worthy of imitation! Oh, shame, where is thy blush!

Reader this is not the Religion of the Bible—it sanctions no such utter perversion of every principle of charity and benevolence. It calls upon us to protect and administer to the necessities of the poor and destitute—not wheedle from them their hard earned substance. And would that its heavenly and benign principles were more conspicuous in the conduct of men.

P.

POSTAGE.

We have preferred but few complaints in regard to Postage of Letters addressed us, though we are far from being without occasion for it. Individuals communicating with a publisher, should recollect that in the multitude of letters constantly receiving, a neglect of paying postage on three fourths, one half, or even one fourth, swells up a heavy tax on him yearly, while to the individuals themselves, it would be but trifling. And when it is recollected that the universal terms of Publications are, "*Letters to be post paid*," it is rank injustice to subject the publisher to this, sometimes, very oppressive tax. It is easily illustrated. An individual resides at a distance, which brings single postage at 25 cents. He incloses a $2 bill, for his years subscription.—The publisher is subjected to the Postage, and here goes, at once, ONE FOURTH of his just due: a heavy discount, truly, for many publishers, with their limited subscriptions. It is so for ourselves, at least. Sometimes uncurrent bills are enclosed, on which there is 5 or 6, and even 10 per cent discount, and then to this will be added double, or perhaps, treble postage.

We recently received a remittance, from a person at a distance, who is personally unknown to us, but who is nevertheless, we doubt not, a well meaning brother. It was a ten dollar bill, for five subscriptions to our *first volume*. The Bill was refused in common trade—we visited Wall-street and the best terms we could make was *ten per cent*. Here was $1, and added to this 50 cents postage which we had to pay, making $1,50 loss on an account of $10, notwithstanding we had waited six months for our pay, *after the volume had closed*. On our first volume, we aimed to give subscribers all reasonable time, to judge of our punctuality, but when our pay does come, it should be without a loss to us of one half for postage or discount. The truth is, individuals do not sufficiently reflect on this subject. Their own neglect in the case, appears trifling, as it in reality is, by itself considered, but they should remember that others view it precisely in the same manner, and that many of them together make it really oppressive to the Publisher.

With agents, with whom we have an understanding, the case is different. And with those who have kindly stepped forward, without any allowance, (and we have many such,) and exerted themselves in extending our circulation. It would be rank injustice in us to require them, in addition to their active labors, to pay postage on communications of business. We do not ask it, and their favors will ever be acceptable without it. But we do ask our friends to let general communications of business come to us, agreeably to our terms, "post paid," particularly when they do not relate so much to ourselves, as to the writers, or their immediate vicinities.

We are always happy to hear from our friends in various sections, and we sometimes almost wish letters were more frequent, even though they may make a draft of a shilling or two each on our limited purse. Situated as we are, there is something peculiarly pleasant in the receipt of letters, although they may come from total strangers. There is a warmth of feeling and frankness about Universalism, that leads to immediate acquaintance, as it were. You seem to sit down to a familiar interchange of views with an old friend—you feel that another link is added to the intricate, yet with all, pleasant chain of existence, and seem called upon for renewed expressions of gratitude to the supreme Ruler of all, for the joys of social life. But we commenced an article of complaint—will the reader excuse us for moralizing at its close?

P.

NEW SOCIETY.

A letter from our esteemed Br. S. R. Sibley, informs us that the friends of God's impartial grace, at Long Ridge, (Stamford) Conn. have recently organized themselves into a Society. The Committee consists of Brs. George Lounsbury, William Todd and Aaron Dean. Br. Sibley, Clerk. Br. Sibley says, "We do not mean to compass sea and land" to gain members to our Society—we acknowledge none but those of good morals. We think Universalists above all men should be *practical* Christians. We would abhor to see them Pharisees; and puffed up with self-righteousness, but desire to see them ever ready to 'do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God.'"

They have it also in contemplation to build a house of worship soon. One individual offers to give the ground, and several others propose liberal donations. We have some acquaintance in Long Ridge, and we know our cause has firm and able advocates there. May the most abundant success attend their exertions in disseminating the doctrine of Universal Benevolence.

P.

GOSPEL ANCHOR, TROY, N.Y.

Proposals have been issued for publishing the 3d vol. of this work, to commence the first week in July ensuing. By them we perceive it is to pass into the hands of Br. HENRY J. GREW, as Editor and Proprietor; Brs. C. T. LE FEVRE, I. D. WILLIAMSON, and R. O. WILLIAMS, Associate Editors. It will be issued every Saturday, and will contain 16 large Octavo pages. Mail Subscribers $1,50 per ann. in advance, and twenty-five cents addition for every three months delay. Letters, &c. to be directed to the Poprietor, Troy, N. Y. post paid. Success attend him.

CALLOWHILL-ST. CHURCH.

Sixth Lecture on the Parables in the Callowhill-St. Church, Philadelphia, on Sunday evening next (to morrow) at 8 o'clock. SUBJECT—*Parable of the Sower*. Math. xii. 3—8.

☞ Br. Andrews, the Pastor of the above Church, has removed to No. 38 John-street.

DIED—In this City, on the 29th ult. Martha-Corinna, daughter of Abram and Sarah Gale, aged 5 years 7 months and 7 days.

RELIGIOUS NOTICE.

Br. C. L. Cook will preach at Long Ridge, Sunday (to-morrow) June 2.

TO SPRING.

BY WILLIAM RAY.

So sweet—so pure—so calm, and bright
Thy beauteous countenance appears,
Thou must have sprung from heavenly light,
Been born of some celestial spheres,
Clothed by a rainbow, richly gay,
And nursed by yonder milky way.

At thy descent, creation smiles;
Nay, hills and vallies laugh and sing;
The rivers, like a thousand Niles,
Their fertilizing tribute bring,
And clap their hands with joy to see
The world from death-like winter free.

Yet oft, methinks, I see thee grieve,
For thou hast dark and dismal hours—
At morn, at noon-tide, and at eve,
Weeping in dew-drops or in showers,
As if thy swelling heart would burst
In floods to quench all nature's thirst.

But cheering sun-beams soon dispel
The cloudy sorrows of thy face,
And on its smiling features dwell
The bloom of beauty—charm of grace;
The feather'd minstrels chant their lays,
In wild, devout, unconscious praise.

To Spring, the bird of heaven's own blue,
Her feeble anthem pours along;
Of bolder notes and brighter hue,
Myriads of warblers catch the song;
While grazing beasts in hoarser strains,
Roar acclamation from the plains.

There's not on earth, there's not in air,
A creature that the Almighty made,
That feels not, owns not, sees not there
His bright beneficence display'd:
Creative wisdom, mercy, power,
Glow in the skies, fall in the shower.

Nature inanimate—if such
In vast creation can be found,
Unites to show his love as much,
And spreads his mighty wonders round,
As those possess'd of living souls,
Where thought expands, and vision rolls.

The humblest flower that decks the vale—
The gloomiest cypress of the grove—
The breath of heaven their leaves inhale,
And whisper back that "God is Love."
Streams speak his praises as they flow,
And winds soft hallelujahs blow.

But man, God's image—where art thou—
Lost in the world's bewildering maze?
Come forth—a grateful heart avow,
And join the vernal song of praise—
The bounteous Lord of lords adore,
And King of kings—for evermore.

THE NATURAL BRIDGE OF VIRGINIA.

[This Bridge is formed by a beautiful natural arch, which extends across Cedar Creek. The following account, connected with this bridge, relates a feat of daring sufficient to make the sternest nerves thrill with horror.]

"Under the beautiful arch is the place where visiters have often taken the pains to engrave their names upon the rock. Here Washington climbed up 25 feet and carved his own name, where it still remains. Some, wishing to immortalize their names, have engraved them deep and large, while others have tried to climb up and insert them high in this book of fame.

"A few years since a young man, being ambitious to place his name above all others, came very near loosing his life in the attempt. After much fatigue he climbed up as high as possible, but found that the person who had before occupied his place, was taller than himself, and, consequently had placed his name above his reach. But he was not to be discouraged. He opened a large jack-knife, and in the soft lime stone began to cut places for his hands and feet. With much patience and industry he worked his way upwards, and succeeded in carving his name higher than the most ambitious had done before him.

"He could now triumph; but his triumph was short, for he was placed in such a situation that it was impossible to descend, unless he fell upon the ragged rocks beneath him. There was no house near from which his companions could get assistance. He could not remain in that condition; and what was worse, his friends were too much frightened to do any thing for his relief. They looked upon him as already dead, expecting every moment to see him precipitated upon the rocks below, and dashed to pieces. Not so with himself. He determined to ascend. Accordingly, he plied himself with his knife, cutting places for his hands and feet, and gradually ascending, with incredible labor. He exerted every muscle. His life was at stake, and all the terrors of death arose around him. He dared not look downwards lest his head should become dizzy, and perhaps on this circumstance his life depended.

"His companions stood at the top of the rock, exhorting and encouraging him. His strength was almost exhausted; but a bare possibility of saving his life still remained, and hope—the last friend of the distressed—had not forsaken him. His course upwards was rather oblique, than perpendicular. His most critical moment had now arrived. He had ascended considerably more than 200 feet, and still further to rise, when he felt himself fast growing weak. He now made his last effort, and succeeded. He had cut his way not far from 250 feet from the water, in a course almost perpendicular; and in a little less than two hours, his anxious companions reached him a pole from the top, and drew him up. They received him with shouts of joy; but he himself was completely exhausted. He immediately fainted away on reaching the spot, and it was sometime before he could be recovered!

"It was interesting to see the path up these awful rocks, and to follow, in imagination this bold youth as he thus saved his life. His name stands far above all the rest, a monument of hardihood, of rashness, and of folly."

AMBITION

How full of gloom and admonition it is, to cast the retrospective glance over that dense crowd who have madly thrown themselves away by yielding to the promptings of violent but unholy Ambition! We weep at the fate of the libertine, or the inebriate; and wonder that, possessing freedom of choice, and having the wretched end of hundreds of libertines or inebriates in his memory, he should have selected the same highway to death, and pressed on as irretrievably to ruin as they had done before him. And well we may. It is a melancholy contemplation truly to witness the gradual but determined progress of an individual, in the broad way that 'leadeth unto death': One whom, with a thousand hearts to pity, and a thousand arms that would with alacrity save—presses on as independently to destruction, as though he were a martyr in a holy cause. But is it not to the full as saddening a sight to see so many of the brightest and noblest of the land led away by the blandishments of Ambition, from seeking their highest and most lasting good? Standing as it were, upon the pinnacle of fortune, with liberty to choose under whose banner they will enrol, how many there are that seek no higher good than the possession of the flitting vanities of human life. With an ambition, if rightly directed, and a power to become bright stars in the world, they aim at nothing higher than that the world should accord to them the bubble reputation; and this they would win 'even at the cannon's mouth.'

Ambition, if rightly directed, gives an ennobling impulse to man. Without it, he would be a drone indeed. But how small is the number, who make it their highest ambition to worship God in spirit and in truth! It is a melancholy sight to the eye of a reflecting person, to see the Ambition of so many, especially of the young, rising no higher, seeking no purer element to luxuriate in, than the following of the changeful and enervating fashions of the world, or revelling in its suductive and ruinous pleasures.

May not much of the injury that results from the wrong tendency of the Ambition of the young, be charged upon parents? Is it unreasonable to suppose, that, if the plastic mind of the child had been impressed with the truth that much of which many in the world are in pursuit, is unworthy the attention of rational creatures, that he would have retained the impression in man or womanhood? Is it too much to expect, if the child be told often and earnestly, that the highest point, at which his Ambition should aim, is the attainment of that fellowship with God, which would draw him nearer and nearer to that great Fount of life and truth—that this sentiment, conveyed with the earnestness and solicitude with which a parent should speak to a child upon so important a topic, 'would stir the divinity within him,' so that when he entered on the broad stage of life, to enact his part in the drama, he should be so deeply imbued in the truth, that his Ambition would point to high and holy purposes? Whose voice wins its way to a child's heart as does that of a parent? Upon whose words does he so implicitly rely? The directing in the right channel of the Ambition of every child, is in the power of the parent. It is a fearful responsibility. Happy will it be for children, and for parents also, if it be properly appreciated and performed.

CONSCIENCE.

An enlightened conscience permits none who slight her voice to have peace. The first wish engendered in the human heart to quit the paths of virtue, is met by this ever wakeful monitor, mildly, but firmly. If her voice be unheeded, if the victim still press on in the broad road that leads to destruction, she is still louder in her dissuasives—He may plunge into the vortex of dissipation—he may participate in scenes of the most voluptuous pleasure—he may surround himself with the most enchanting music that ever enraptured the ear or entered the heart; but whose voice is louder than the voice of bacchanalian companions? whose reproaches are ever ringing in his ear, amid the grossest sensuality? whose thunderings are ever rolling about him, when beauty and fashion are discoursing 'eloquent music' in his presence?—It is the voice of *conscience!* Her warning call has been unheeded, and fearfully does she punish the neglect. Whether sleeping or waking, alone or surrounded by revellers, she is ever sounding in her violator's ear—guilty! guilty!

UNIVERSALIST BOOKS.

The following Universalist Books are kept constantly for sale at the Messenger office, 2 and 3 Marble-Building, Chatham-Square, New York.

Christian Messenger, Volume I. bound, 2 dolls.

Murray's Life, with preface and notes, 75 cents.

Ancient History of Universalism, from the age of the apostles to the Reformation. Price $1,20.

Modern History of Universalism, from the Reformation to the present time. Price $1,20.

Pickering's Lectures, in defence of Divine Revelation With a Likeness of the Author. 75 cents.

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